

REMARKS

The language “in solid form” in claims 12 and 14 is meant to mean continuous. All claims indicate an application pattern of a lubricant for the easily-peelable layer 30 (claim 12) in Fig. 5(B) and the easily-peelable layer 40 (claim 14) in Fig. 6(B). In addition, because no lubricant is applied to the “tab”, as can be seen from Fig. 6(B), claim 14 is amended so as to exclude the “tab” from the area to be applied with the release agent.

As correctly pointed out in the first Office Action, one of the differences between the claimed invention and Miyoshi’s invention is whether or not the second slit that separates the easily-peelable area from non-peelable area is present. In this respect, the Examiner asserts that Elias discloses a slit laid along the boundary line between the easily-peelable area and the non-peelable area and that the second slit of the present invention could be thought of by combining Elias’ technology with Miyoshi’s technology.

However, while the “single tear line 41” disclosed by Elias in Figs. 5 and 7 is merely a line for tearing off a lid member, the second slit of the present invention is a slit for peeling a portion of a layer of a layered lid member (the surface sheet). More specifically, the lid member disclosed by Elias does not have a layered structure, different from the claimed invention, and thus does not disclose or suggest the second slit of the claimed invention, and thus does not disclose or suggest the second slit of applicants’ claimed invention. Consequently even if Miyoshi’s invention is combined with Elias’ invention, the second slit of the present invention could not be thought of.

Furthermore, while the claims herein define applying a lubricant in the form of a pattern, neither of the cited references discloses applying a lubricant in the form of a pattern. Applying a lubricant in the form of a pattern can facilitate adjustment of the bonding strength in the easily-peelable area, and can easily be put into practice by using printing means. In other words, the bonding strength can be adjusted by controlling a printing area of a lubricant without having to go through delicate mixing of components of the release agent.

Furthermore, the bonding strength can easily be adjusted locally by partially changing the pattern (including changing the fineness of the pattern, applying in solid (continuous) form, etc.). For example, the bonding strength can be lowered by applying a release agent in solid (continuous) form. Claim 12 describes applying a release agent to an area along the second slit continuously to weaken the bonding strength of such an area and to thereby make

it easy to peel the surface sheet from the composite sheet during opening. As described above, according to the present invention, the bonding strength can locally be changed without having to go through difficult operations such as locally changing the concentration of a releasing agent, locally applying a releasing agent twice, etc.

Furthermore, applying a lubricant in the form of a pattern generates dot-shaped bonding spots or line-shaped bonding spots that have a strong bonding strength. If a portion of the composite sheet in the opening area at which a water-discharging aperture is to be formed is applied with a lubricant in solid (continuous) form, the portion becomes easily peelable and may be dropped into the container, thereby causing the food to be contaminated with the portion. However, applying a lubricant in the form of a pattern whose bonding spots are smaller than the diameter of the opening area (i.e., water-discharging aperture) will ensure a strong bonding portion in which no release agent is applied is present on the composite sheet in the opening area. This portion of the composite sheet in the opening area will adhere to the surface sheet, thereby preventing the portion of the composite sheet in the opening area from being peeled off.

Furthermore, claims 15 and 16 describe a lubricant that contains wax. Neither of the cited references discloses this material. The wax starts bleeding as its temperature increases, and thus the bonding strength at an area where the lubricant is applied is lowered (see the Example (Table 1) in the present specification). Because the claimed invention is primarily used for a lid of a water dischargeable container into which hot water is poured and then discharged through its water-discharging apertures, decrease in the bonding strength at the time of peeling off the surface sheet in the easily-peelable area to discharge water, which was previously poured when hot, is extremely useful for achieving the objectives of the claimed invention, and bring about a special effect. In other words, at the time of use (opening), the bonding strength is lowered, thereby making it easy to peel off the surface sheet. At the time of use, the bonding strength is high, thereby making it possible to prevent the surface sheet from peeling off from the composite sheet.

As described above, the present invention could not be thought of by combining the cited references in any manner. Moreover, the claimed invention is not obvious because it offers a special effect.

It is submitted that all claims are now of proper form and scope for allowance. Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Dated: July 12, 2004

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Attachments

Application No.: 09/857,904

Docket No.: 19036/37471



ANNOTATED SHEETS SHOWING CHANGES



FIG. 1(A)

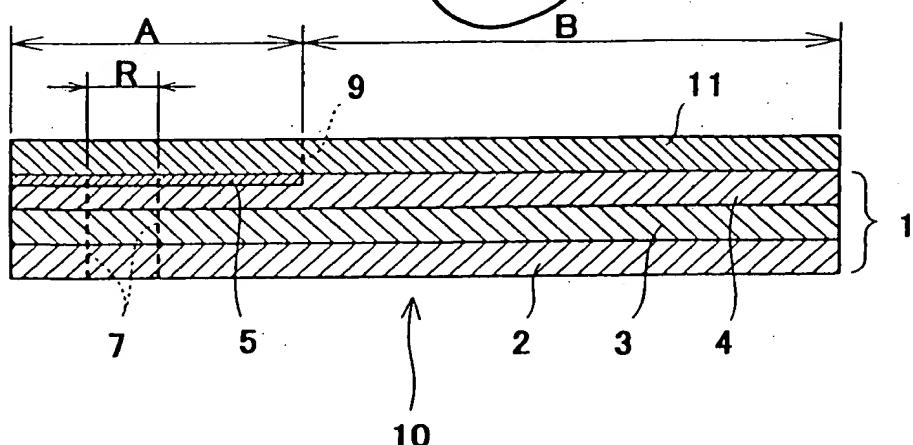


FIG. 1(B)

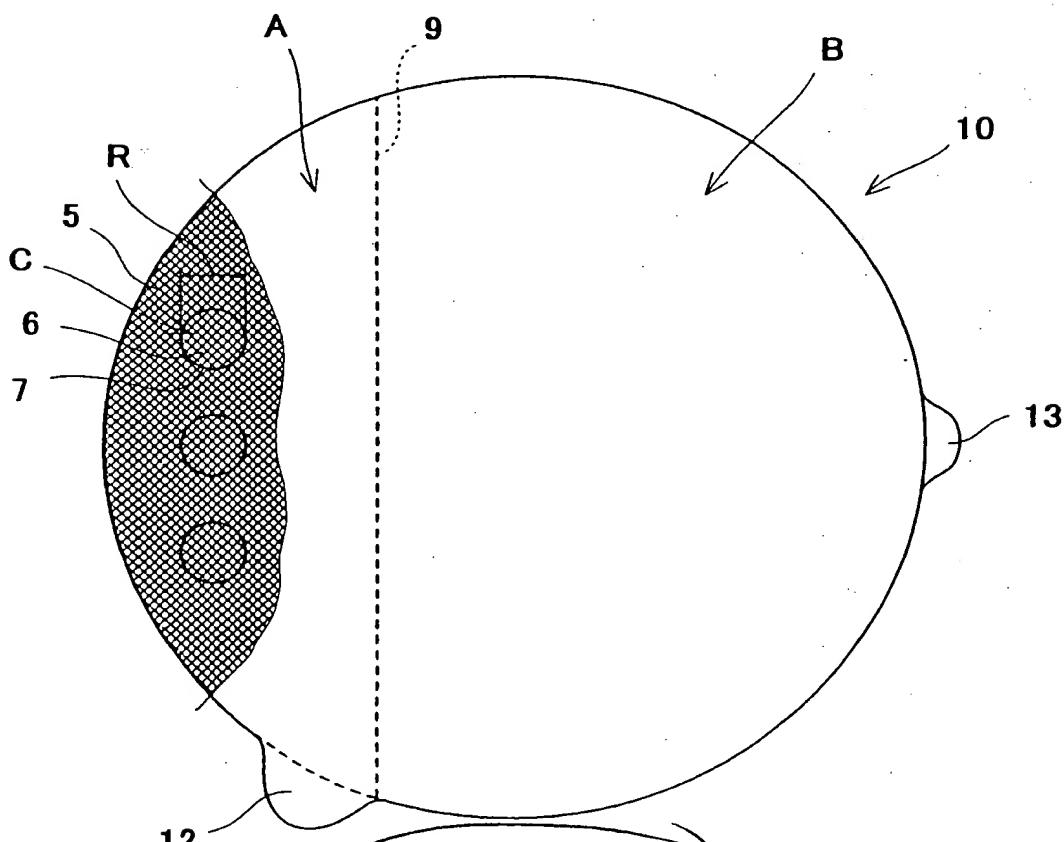


FIG. 1(B)

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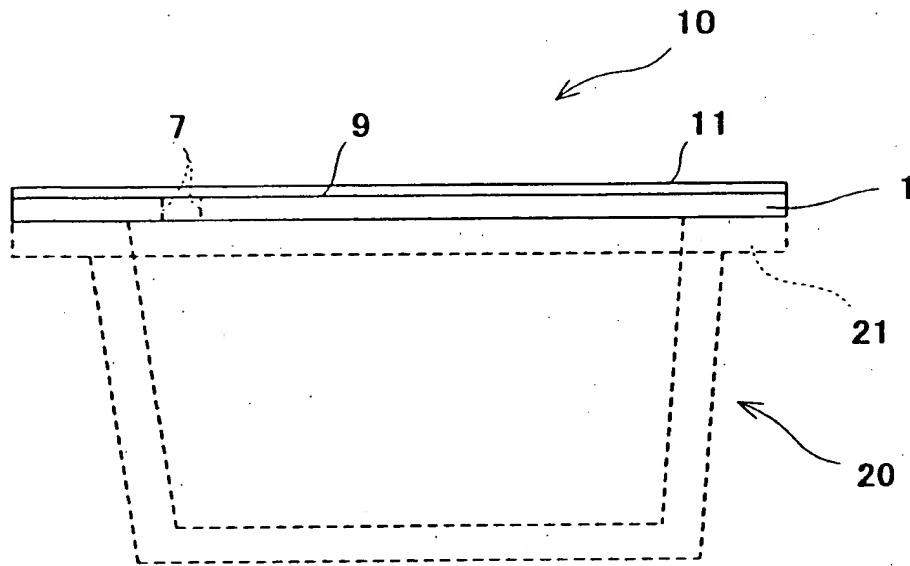
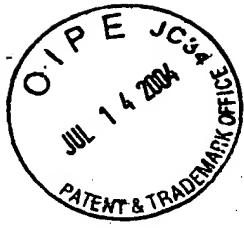


FIG. 2



FIG. 3(A)

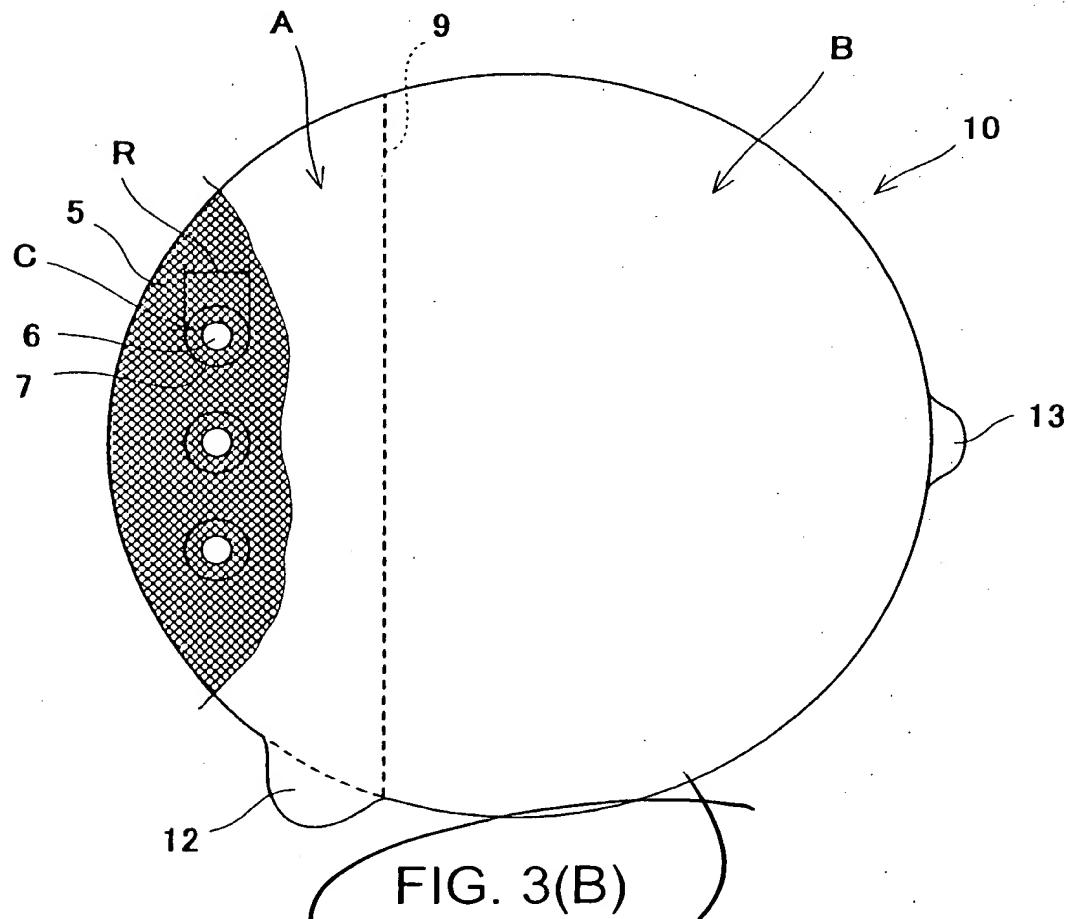
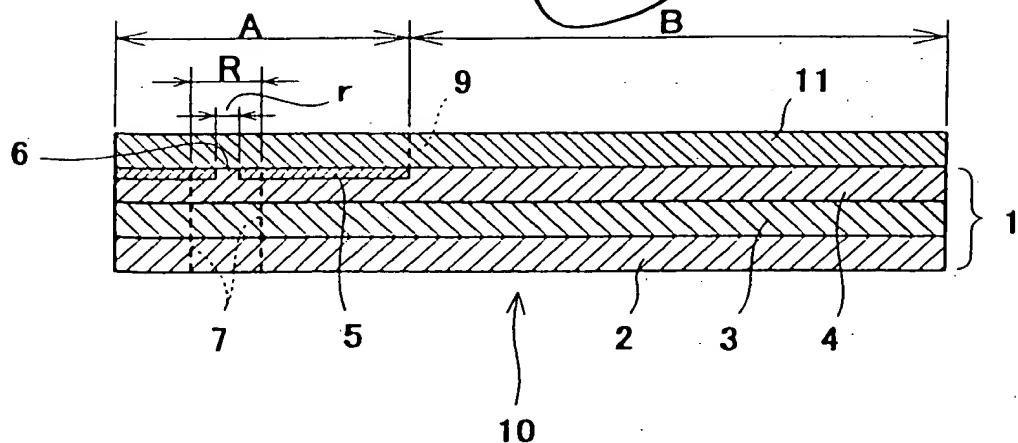


FIG. 3(B)



FIG. 4(A)

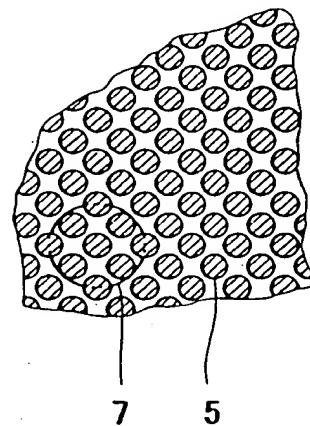


FIG. 4(B)

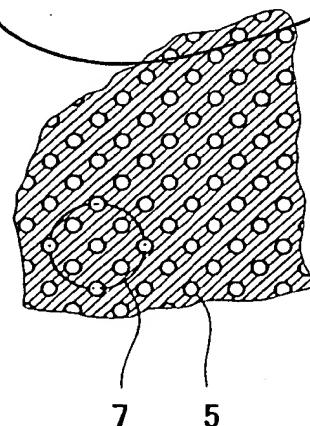




FIG. 5(A)

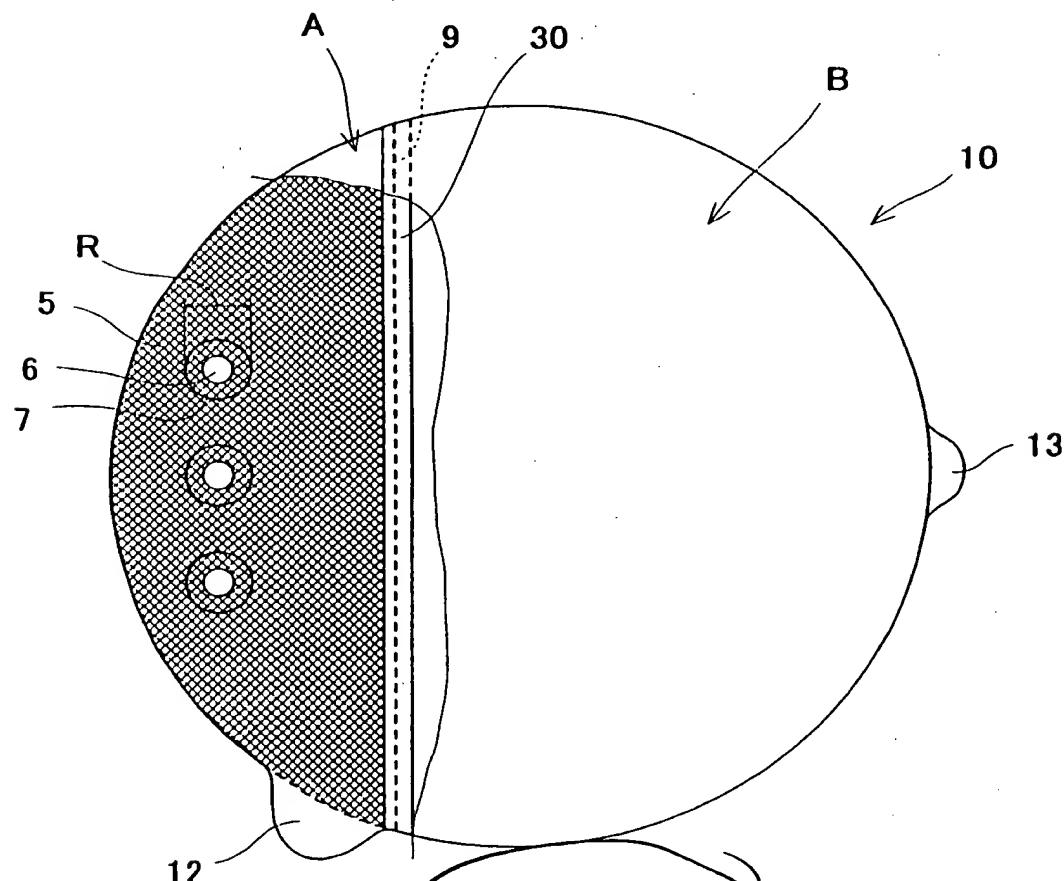
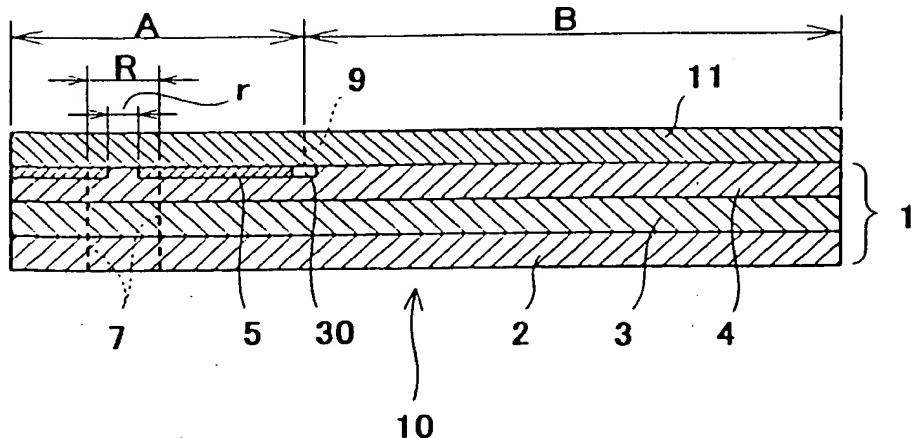


FIG. 5(B)

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FIG. 6(A)

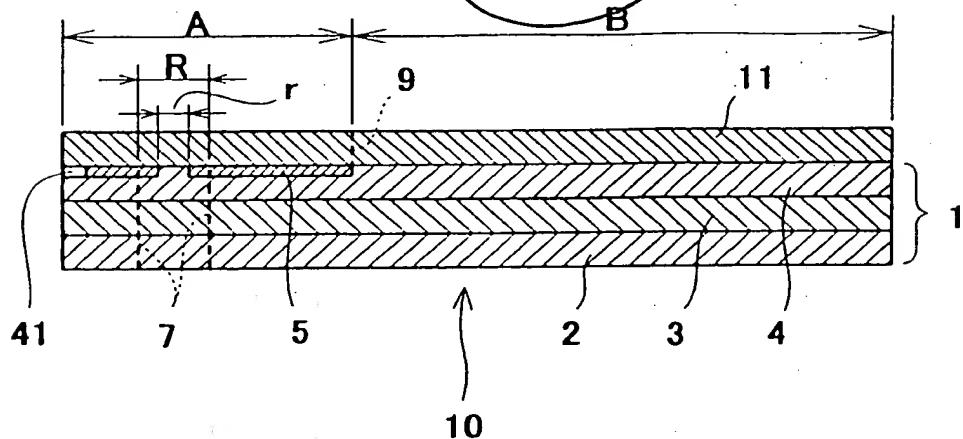


FIG. 6(B)

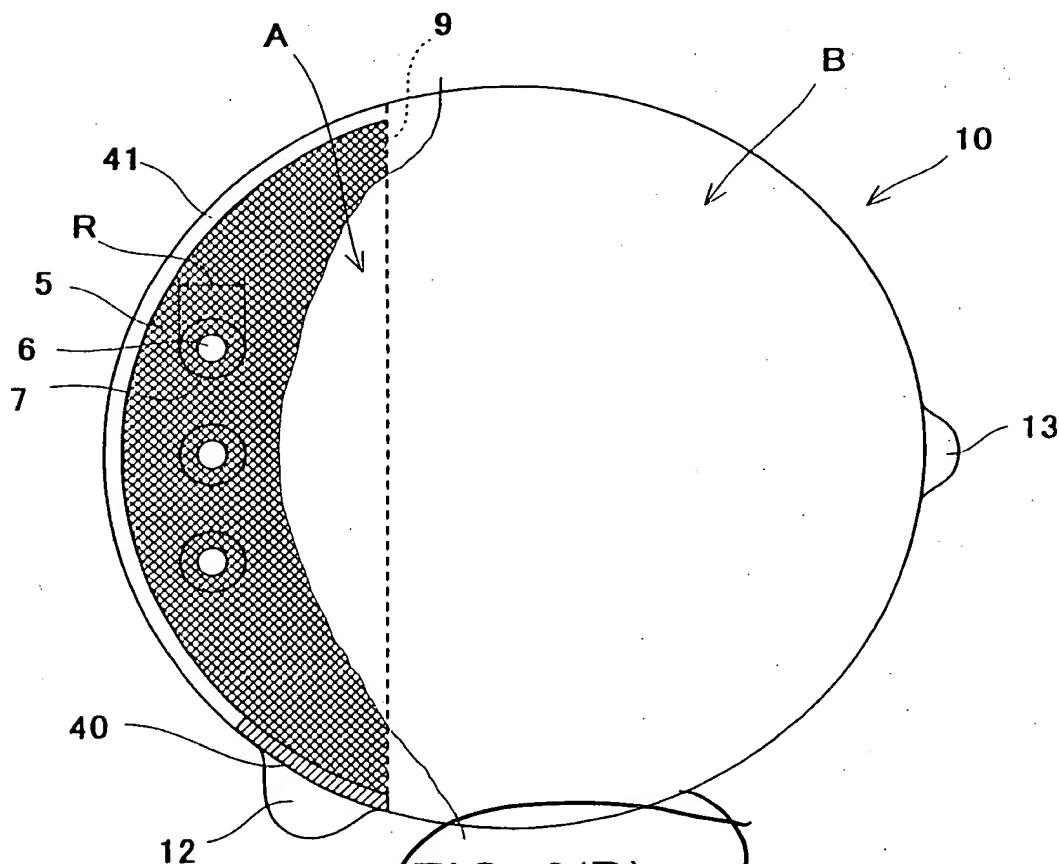




FIG. 7(A)

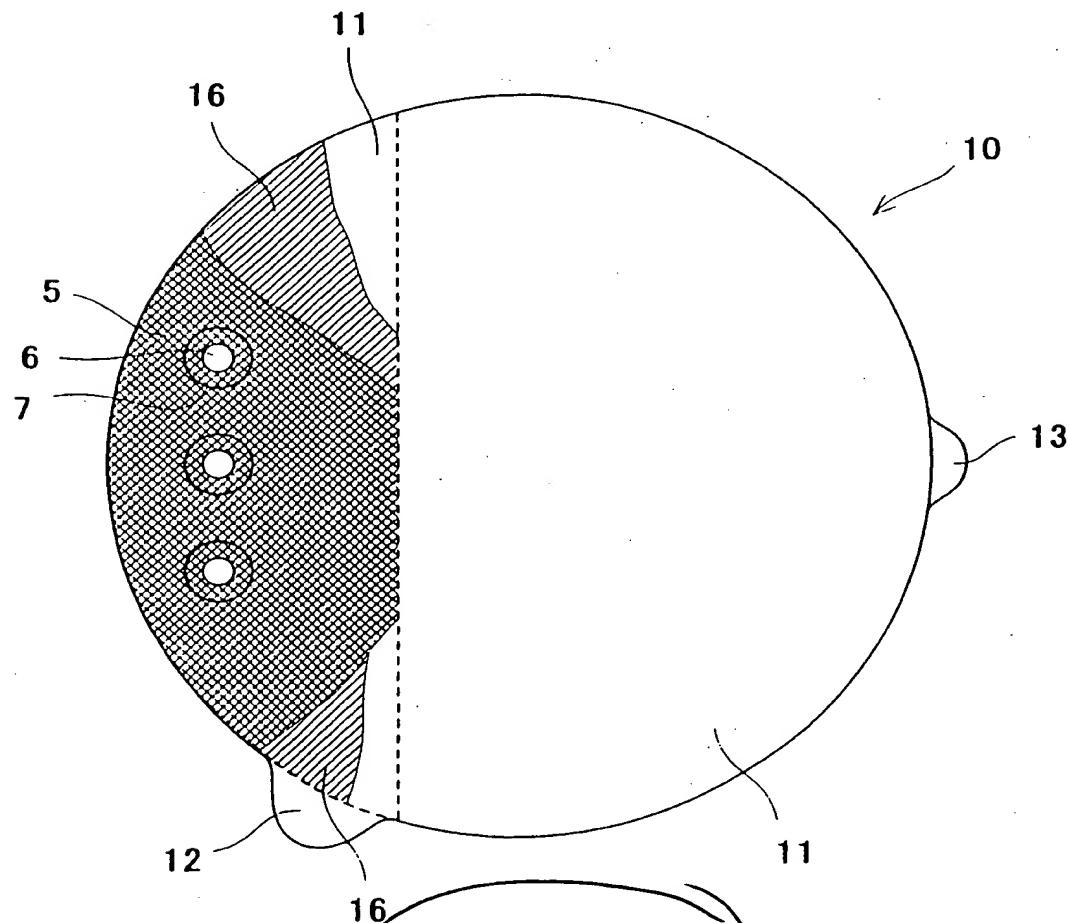
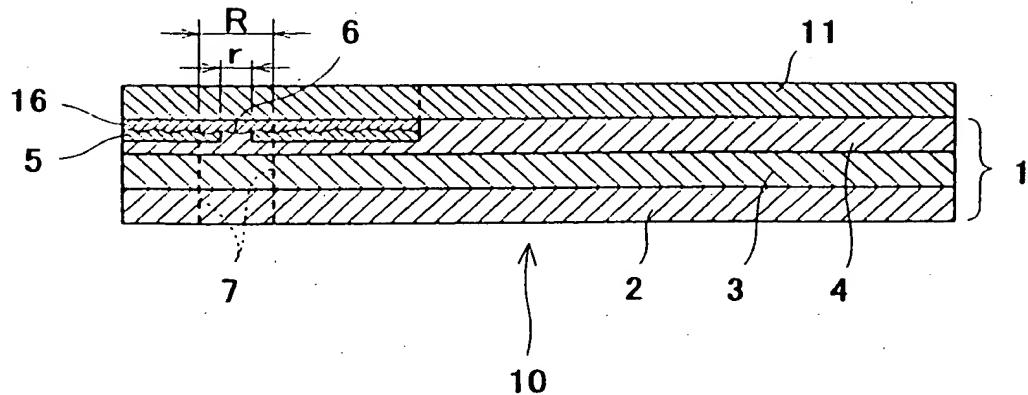


FIG. 7(B)

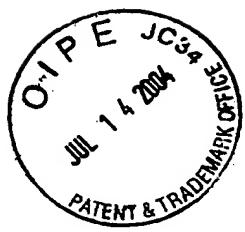
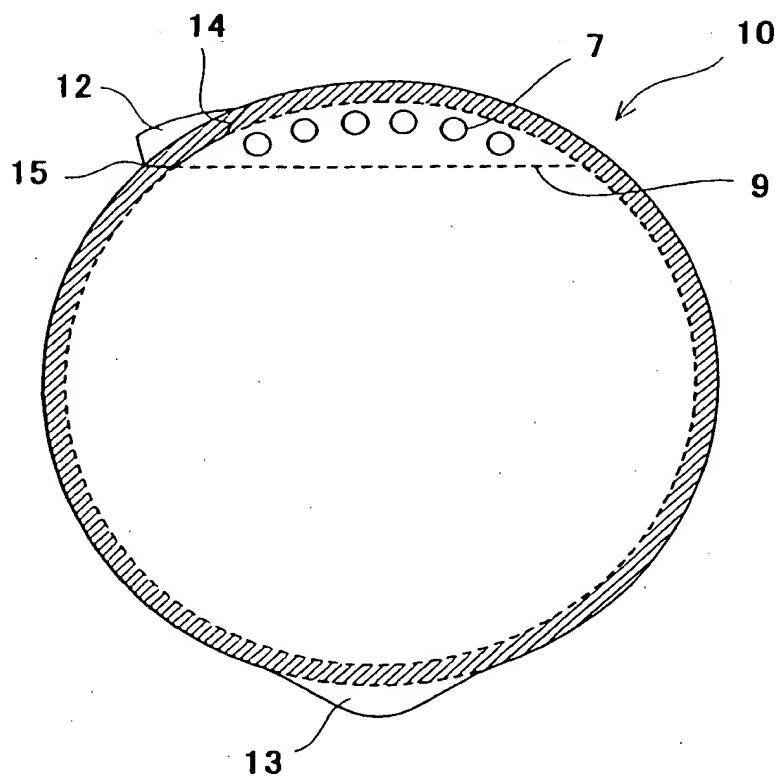


FIG. 8



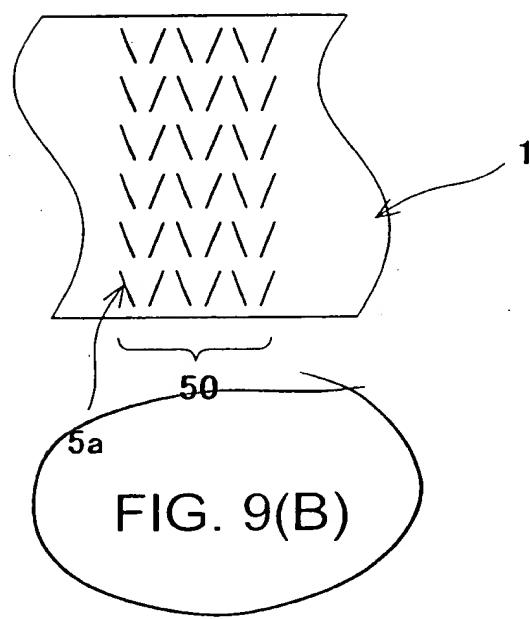
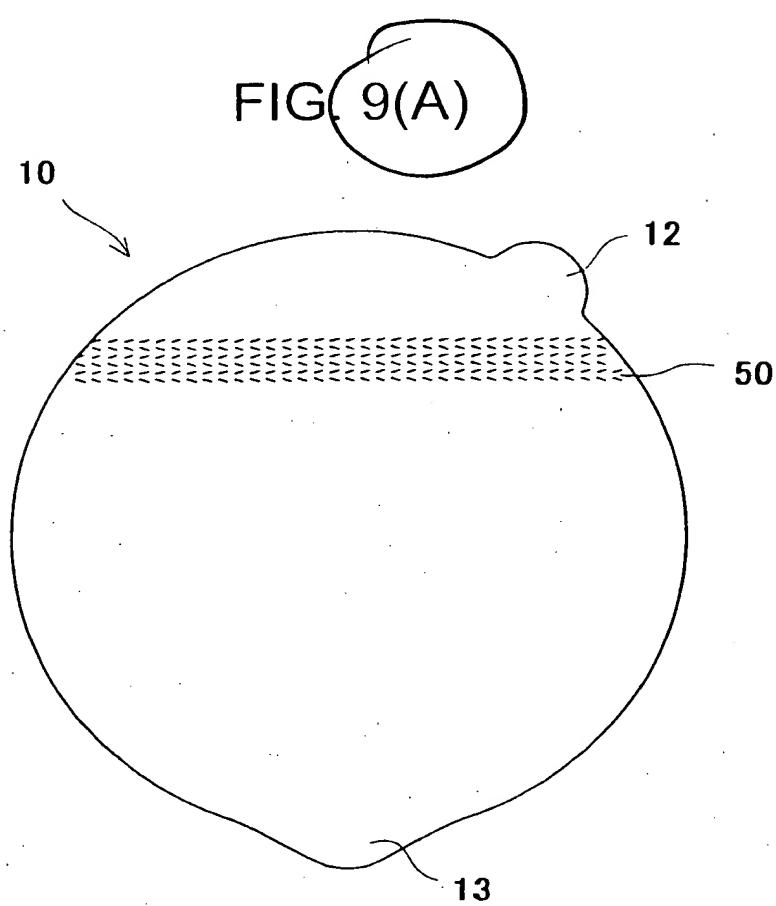




FIG. 10

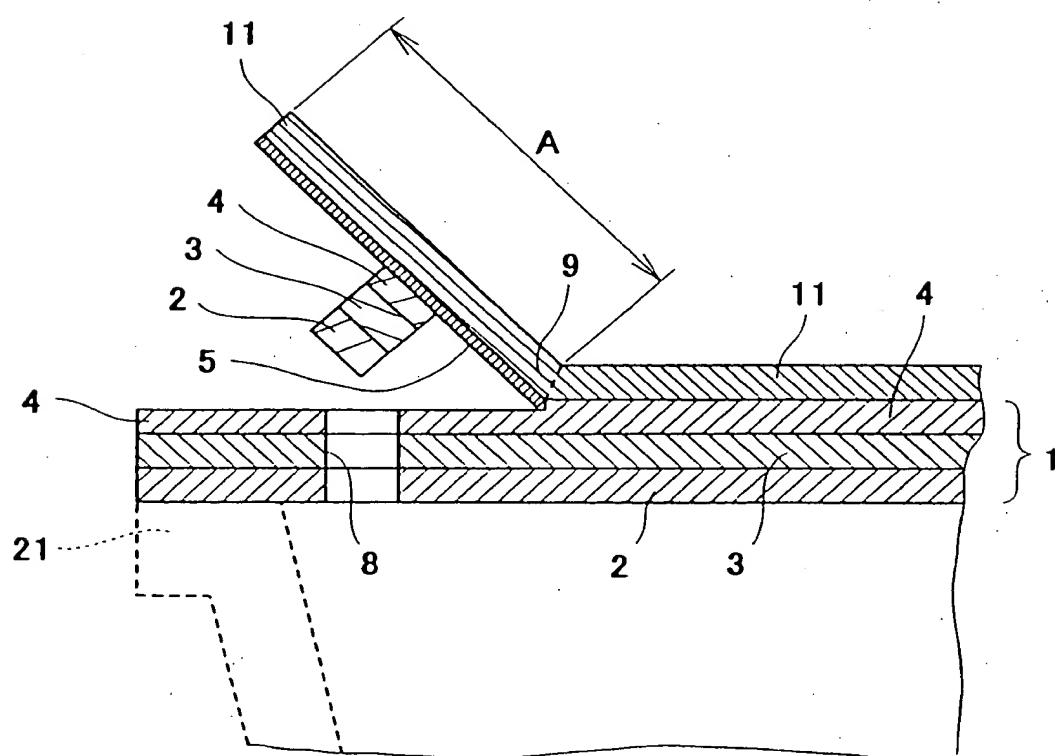




FIG. 11

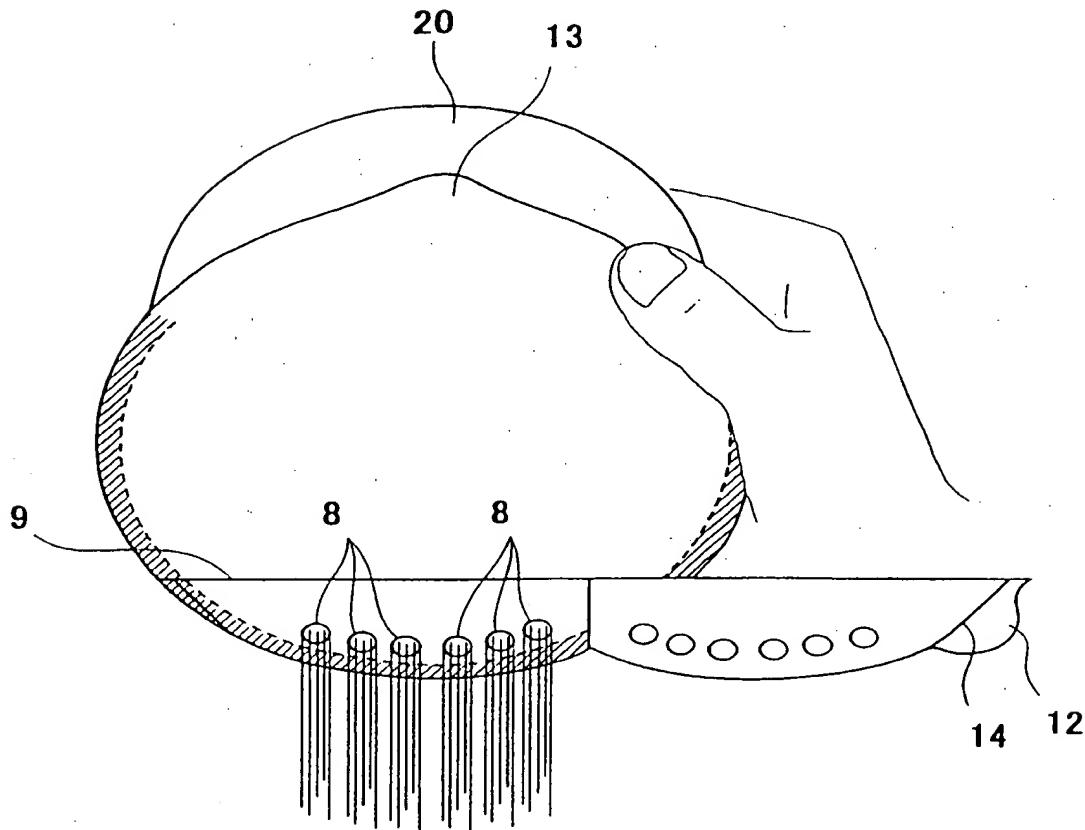




FIG. 12(A)
(PRIOR ART)

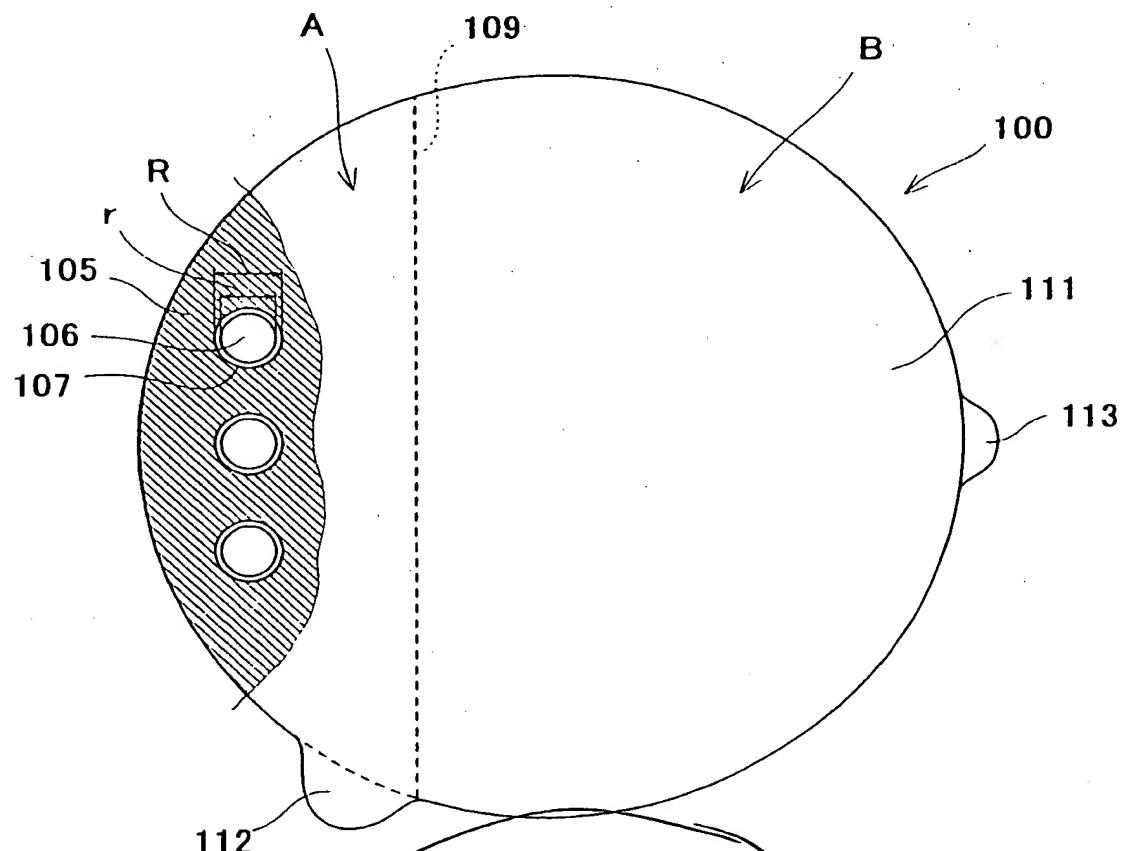
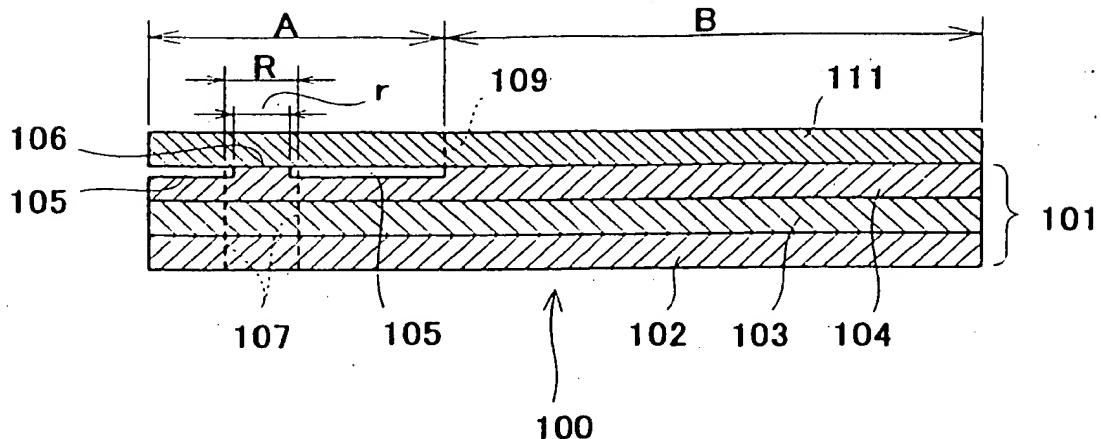


FIG. 12(B)
(PRIOR ART)



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FIG. 13
(PRIOR ART)

